

DATE: September 20, 2007

FROM: Allan Krauter
Kern County Administrative Office

TO: Members, Delta Vision Blue Ribbon Task Force

Attached please find comments from the Kern County Board of Supervisors regarding the draft Vision for Durable Management of a Sustainable Delta as well as a resolution adopted by the Board of Supervisors in April 2007.

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

SUPERVISORS

Jon McQuiston District 1
Don Maben District 2
Mike Maggard District 3
Raymond A. Watson District 4
Michael J. Rubio District 5



KATHLEEN KRAUSE
CLERK OF BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Kern County Administrative Center
1115 Truxtun Avenue, 5th Floor
Bakersfield, California 93301
Telephone 661-868-3585
TTY Relay 800-735-2929

September 20, 2007

The Honorable Phil Isenberg
Chair, Delta Vision Blue Ribbon Task Force
650 Capitol Mall, Fifth Floor
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Comments regarding Draft Vision for Durable Management of a Sustainable Delta

Dear Assembly Member Isenberg:

The Kern County Board of Supervisors supports many of the conclusions stated in the Draft Vision, particularly the recognition that both the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta ecosystem and its water system must be preserved. It is our hope that the Task Force will develop a plan of action to be placed before California voters for financing Delta improvements that will be joined by long overdue investments in water storage, conveyance, and quality as part of an overall plan for California. Improvements to the Delta should balance competing economic interests with environmental protections while equitably distributing the costs and benefits among Californians.

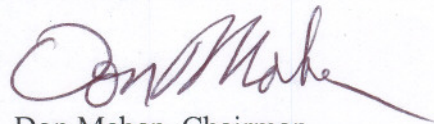
Growing threats to Delta water supplies on which most Californians rely and to the Delta's unique ecosystem have been well documented. We agree that current management of the Delta is unsustainable for the interests of stakeholders on all sides: Delta residents and farmers, environmental advocates, and the growing populations that use Delta water supplies. It is equally clear that it will be increasingly costly, imprudent, and ineffective simply to continue fortifying the Delta's system of aging levees against rising sea levels, land subsidence, earthquakes, and severe winter flooding.

Our Board agrees that regional investments in water use efficiency, groundwater recharge, groundwater banking, and more water conscious land use planning will help more arid regions of California to minimize demand for outside water resources. However, we take issue with the Draft Vision's implication that areas outside the Delta must simply live with far less water in the future in order to restore the Delta's ecosystem. Many factors unrelated to Delta water exports have contributed to the reduction in fish populations, including local water and land use practices. Construction of an isolated Delta conveyance facility could, in fact, help to minimize conflict between efforts to recover Delta fish species and to maintain water supplies at their current levels. We ask Task Force members also to recognize that this would not be the first such facility in the Delta. San Francisco Bay Area water suppliers now export drinking water from Delta tributaries through isolated facilities, while the California Aqueduct and the Central Valley Project run water already appropriated from upstream tributaries through the Delta before exporting it.

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The attached resolution adopted by our Board supports a solution that will require water conservation by all users, set reasonable and achievable environmental goals, finance intelligent infrastructure choices, maintain water supplies at their current levels, and distribute costs equitably according to the respective benefits that Delta investments deliver to water users and to California as a whole. As the Blue Ribbon Task Force works to implement a long-term plan for the Delta, Kern County requests that the Delta Vision embrace a broad horizon that includes not only environmental values but also California's long-term water needs.

Sincerely,



Don Maben, Chairman
Kern County Board of Supervisors

DM:ADK\Water\Delta Canal\Blue Ribbon comments sept07 FINAL.doc
CF 1000.30
Attachment

cc: Greater Bakersfield Chamber of Commerce
Kern County Farm Bureau
Kern County Water Agency

BEFORE THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

COUNTY OF KERN, STATE OF CALIFORNIA

In the matter of:

Resolution No. 2007-138

Reference No. _____

SUPPORT FOR SACRAMENTO-SAN JOAQUIN DELTA
IMPROVEMENTS THAT BALANCE ENVIRONMENTAL
AND ECONOMIC COSTS AND BENEFITS

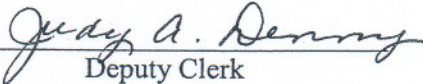
I, DENISE PENNELL, Clerk of the Board of Supervisors of the County of Kern, State of California, hereby certify that the following resolution, on motion of Supervisor Watson, seconded by Supervisor Maggard, was duly and regularly adopted by the Board of Supervisors of the County of Kern at an official meeting thereof on the 17th day of April, 2007, by the following vote and that a copy of the resolution has been delivered to the Chairman of the Board of Supervisors.

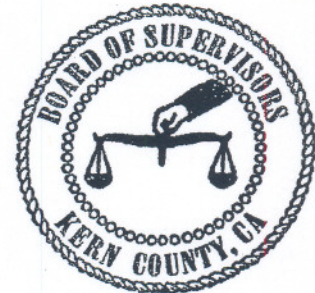
AYES: McQuiston, Maben, Maggard, Watson, Rubio

NOES: None

ABSENT: None

DENISE PENNELL
Clerk of the Board of Supervisors
County of Kern, State of California


Deputy Clerk



RESOLUTION

Section 1. WHEREAS:

- a) The Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta is one of California's most important resources, providing critical wildlife habitat for unique species, infrastructure pathways, shipping channels, and water

supplies for agricultural, urban and recreational uses, effectively serving as the state's water crossroads; and

- b) Nearly 25 million Californians, as well as industry and agriculture, depend on Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta water supplies that comprise 22 percent of Kern County's water supply, nearly one-fourth of the drinking water for Southern California, and 33 percent of the San Francisco Bay area's potable water; and
- c) The loss of Delta fresh water supplies would result in \$30 billion to \$40 billion in economic losses over five years and the loss of more than 30,000 jobs, as well as loss of the Delta's freshwater fish and wildlife habitat; and
- d) The growing threats of severe winter flooding, earthquakes, rising sea levels, and land subsidence place the Delta's ecosystem and its economic benefits at increasing risk of catastrophic levee failures that would quickly flood much of the Delta with salt water, destroying much of the region's fragile ecosystem and rendering its waters unusable for years; and
- e) Since continued reliance on levees will be costly, imprudent, and unworkable over the long term while current water management practices in the Delta are unsustainable for almost all stakeholders, California's economic survival depends on finding ways to convey water through and around the Delta for export that can avoid or mitigate the risk of levee failures and preserve the Delta ecosystem; and
- f) The urgency of a Delta solution was underscored by a March 22 Superior Court ruling that pumping from the Delta into the California Aqueduct must cease within 60 days if the California Department of Water Resources cannot obtain the proper environmental authorizations; and

Section 2. NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED by the Board of Supervisors of the County of Kern, State of California, as follows:

1. Water pumping and accompanying protections for fish and wildlife populations in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta must continue, and the State must place before voters a plan of long-term investments to protect Delta water supplies and its ecosystem.

2. Sustainable management of the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta will require all Californians to conserve water, balance competing economic needs, support workable and reasonable environmental goals, and bear their proportionate share of the substantial cost to protect this vital resource for current and future generations.

3. An isolated Delta conveyance system that can carry sufficient water to the California Aqueduct to meet the needs of Californians who rely on the Delta, provide more flexible pumping operations to protect salmon fish populations, and help prevent flood damage to shipping channels and other vital infrastructure within the Delta should be a part of any State plan to change the management of the Delta.

4. Copies of this resolution shall be forwarded to the Governor, all members of the Legislature, and other appropriate officials.

COPIES FURNISHED:
<i>Co. Council</i>
<i>CAO</i>
<i>See Above</i>
<i>4-20-07</i> <i>jd</i>